

Working in the UK:

Know your rights and where to get help and advice

Workers in the UK benefit from a range of basic workplace rights and protections. These include the following:

- You must be paid at least the National Minimum Wage – currently £5.52 an hour. This is normally updated annually. Different minimum wage rates are set for those under 22, and for agricultural workers
- You are entitled to a minimum of 24 days paid holiday a year (increasing to 28 days from April 2009). This period is reduced pro rata if you work part-time. For agricultural workers in England and Wales working five days a week, the minimum is 31 days, including public holidays
- You do not have to work more than 48 hours a week on average unless you have agreed in writing that you are willing to do so
- You are protected against any unauthorised deductions being made from your wages
- You are protected from discrimination on grounds of race, sex, disability, marital status, age, sexual orientation, religion, or membership or non-membership of a trade union
- You must be provided with a safe and healthy working environment

If you have 'employee' status you may be entitled to additional rights such as maternity leave and protection against unfair dismissal although some rights only apply following a qualifying period.

This leaflet can only mention in general terms some of the basic workplace rights. If you think you are not receiving rights to which you are entitled, you should seek further advice.

Suggestions about where to go for further information and advice are shown overleaf.

BERR

Department for Business
Enterprise & Regulatory Reform

Who to contact for more information

A range of organisations and websites provide information and advice on workplace issues. These include:

Directgov

For online information on employment rights and responsibilities visit www.direct.gov.uk/employees

National Minimum Wage Helpline

For more information on how much you should be paid or if you think your pay is less than the legal minimum, call 0845 6000 678. If you work in the agricultural sector you should call 0845 000 0134

Gangmasters Licensing Authority

For questions about the status or conduct of gangmasters in agriculture or food processing, call 0845 602 5020 or visit www.gla.gov.uk

Employment Agency Standards Helpline

For advice about employment agency legislation or if you wish to complain about an agency, call 0845 955 5105

Health and Safety Executive

For concerns about health and safety at work, or about working hours, call 0845 345 0055 or visit www.hse.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Bureau

CABs offer free and confidential advice on a range of issues. For your nearest office look under 'C' in your phone book or visit www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Acas

Acas is a public body promoting good workplace relations. For free advice on employment issues call 08457 474747 or visit www.acas.org.uk

Trades Union Congress

For copies of a 'Know Your Rights' leaflet (available in a number of European languages), or for information on how to join a union, visit www.tuc.org.uk/rights

